

Transcript: Prime Minister Trudeau, joined by Ministers Freeland, Blair, Lametti and Mendicino hold a news conference - 2022-02-14 - 16:30 EST

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Attachments: Transcript Prime Minister Trudeau, joined by Ministers Freeland, Blair, Lametti and Mendicino hold a news conference - 2022-02-14 - 1630 EST.doc (106.99 kB)

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DATE/DATE:

February 14, 2022

4:30 p.m. EST

LOCATION/ENDROIT:

3rd Floor Foyer, West Block, Parliament Buildings, OTTAWA, ON

PRINCIPALS/PRINCIPAUX:

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada
Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
Hon. David Lametti, Minister of Justice
Hon. Marco Mendicino, Minister of Public Safety
Hon. Bill Blair, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness

SUBJECT/SUJET:

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, joined by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada David Lametti, Minister of Public Safety Marco E. L. Mendicino and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness Bill Blair, holds a news conference.

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: Bonjour tout le monde. Je suis accompagné aujourd'hui par la Vice Première Freeland et les Ministres Lametti, Mendicino et Blair. Je suis ici pour faire le point sur les barrages illégaux. Je veux aussi parler de nos efforts de soutenir l'Ukraine face à l'agression russe mais évidemment commençons par la situation ici au Canada.

We're entering the third week of illegal blockades that have been disrupting the lives of too many Canadians. Here in our capital city families, small businesses have been enduring illegal obstruction of their neighbourhoods. Occupying streets, harassing people, breaking the law, this is not a peaceful protest.

At the borders in different parts of the country the blockades are harming our economy and endangering public safety. Critical supply chains have been disrupted. This is hurting workers who rely on these jobs to feed their families. Yesterday the Ambassador Bridge was reopened between Windsor and Detroit.

Our team and I have been working with Ontario and the city of Windsor around the clock. I want to thank the officers on the ground including the RCMP who played an active role. We now have a

responsibility to make sure the bridge stays open. With each illegal blockade local law enforcement agencies have been acting to keep the peace within their jurisdiction.

Despite their best efforts, it is now clear there are serious challenges to law enforcement's ability to effectively enforce the law. On Friday Ontario invoked a state of emergency to respond to the blockades. This was the responsible and necessary thing to do. Today to continue building on these efforts the federal government is ready to use more tools at its disposal to get the situation fully under control.

After discussing with Cabinet and caucus, after consultation with Premiers from all provinces and territories, after speaking with Opposition Leaders, the federal government has invoked the Emergencies Act to supplement provincial and territorial capacity to address the blockades and occupations. I want to be very clear. The scope of these measures will be time limited, geographically targeted as well as reasonable and proportionate to the threats they are meant to address.

The Emergencies Act will be used to strengthen and support law enforcement agencies at all levels across the country. This is about keeping Canadians safe, protecting people's jobs and restoring confidence in our institutions. Here's how the measures we're taking today will help get the situation under control.

The police will be given more tools to restore order in places where public assemblies can constitute illegal and dangerous activities such as blockades and occupations as seen in Ottawa, the Ambassador Bridge and elsewhere. These tools include strengthening their ability to impose fines or imprisonment. The government will designate, secure and protect places and infrastructure that are critical to our economy and people's jobs including border crossings and airports.

We cannot and will not allow illegal and dangerous activities to continue. The Emergencies Act will also allow the government to make sure essential services are rendered, for example in order to tow vehicles blocking roads. In addition, financial institutions will be authorized or directed to render essential services to help address the situation including by regulating and prohibiting the use of property to fund or support illegal blockades.

Finally, it will enable the RCMP to enforce municipal bylaws and provincial defences where required. This is what the Emergencies Act does. Let me be equally clear about what it does not do. We're not using the Emergencies Act to call in the military. We're not suspending fundamental rights or overriding the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We are not limiting people's freedom of speech. We are not limiting freedom of peaceful assembly.

We are not preventing people from exercising their right to protest legally. We are reinforcing the principles, values and institutions that keep all Canadians free. Après des discussions avec le Conseil des Ministres et le caucus, après avoir consulté les Premiers Ministres de toutes les provinces et territoires et après avoir parlé avec les Chefs de l'Opposition, le gouvernement fédéral invoque la Loi sur les Mesures d'Urgence pour compléter les pouvoirs provinciaux et territoriaux visant à gérer l'occupation et les barrages illégaux.

Je veux être très clair. Ces mesures vont être limitées dans le temps et ciblées géographiquement. Elles vont être raisonnables et proportionnelles aux menaces à la sécurité du Canada. La Loi sur les Mesures d'Urgence va renforcer et soutenir le travail des policiers. On ne se sert pas de la Loi sur les Mesures d'Urgence pour déployer l'armée.

On ne suspend pas les droits fondamentaux prévus dans la Charte des droits et libertés. On ne limite pas la liberté d'expression ni le droit de manifester pacifiquement. Ce qu'on veut c'est d'assurer la sécurité des Canadiens, protéger les emplois des travailleurs et rétablir la confiance dans nos institutions. The Emergencies Act is not something that's been used ever but it exists for a reason.

Invoking the Emergencies Act is never the first thing a government should do nor even the second. The Act is to be used sparingly and as a last resort. Right now the situation requires additional tools not held by any other federal, provincial or territorial law. Today in these circumstances it is now clear that responsible leadership requires us to do this. These measures must be and will be compliant with our Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Indeed, the Emergencies Act was created in the late 80's to flow from and uphold the Charter. We will always defend the rights of Canadians to peaceful assembly and to freedom of expression but these blockades are illegal. If you're still participating the time to go home is now. On a separate track from the Emergencies Act, I want to reassure people that the Canadian Border Services Agency is already turning back non-Canadians trying to enter Canada to participate in blockades.

Of course while we get the situation under control we'll continue to have Canadians' backs. I want to remind affected businesses that if you're facing revenue losses, support is available through our wage and rent subsidy programs. We know that downtown Ottawa businesses in particular have been hard hit by these illegal activities. In the coming days we'll be launching specific support for those businesses.

I know that everyone is tired of this pandemic. We're hearing your frustration with COVID and even with the temporary measures we had to put forward to keep people safe. I know people are frustrated. I hear it. You have a right to express that frustration and even your anger with the government or government policies. It's something we'll always defend in this free and democratic country.

But blockading streets and critical infrastructure and depriving your neighbours of their freedoms is a totally different thing. It has to stop. Tout le monde est fatigué de la pandémie. Il y a d'autres façons de vous exprimer que de participer à des activités illégales et dangereuses.

Comme le Ministre Duclos l'a dit la semaine passée, les mesures de santé publique sont constamment réévaluées et on va continuer de les modifier en fonction de la science. On va justement avoir quelques annonces à faire à ce sujet dans les prochains jours.

Today I also want to speak briefly about our support for Ukraine. On Saturday I spoke with President Zelensky to reaffirm Canada's steadfast support and to continue to do whatever we can to support Ukraine. Durant la fin de semaine j'ai aussi eu des appels avec le Président du Conseil Européen Charles Michel, avec le Chancelier Scholz de l'Allemagne et avec le Président Duda de la Pologne.

As part of the collective G7 response to support Ukraine's economic resilience, today we're announcing Canada will offer a loan of up to \$500 million to the government of Ukraine. I want to thank Deputy Prime Minister Freeland for her leadership on this file and underline this is in addition to the \$120 million loan offered earlier in January. On top of financial support, Canada has already taken steps to help Ukraine defend itself including with the extension of the training mission Operation Unifier.

In light of the seriousness of the situation and following conversations with our Ukrainian partners, I have approved the provision of \$7.8 million worth of lethal equipment and ammunition. This responds to Ukraine's specific request and is in addition to the non-lethal equipment we've already provided. The intent of this support from Canada and other partners is to deter further Russian aggression.

En raison du sérieux de la situation et après avoir soigneusement examiné la question, j'ai approuvé la demande de l'Ukraine de leur envoyer de l'armement et de la munition. Le Canada se joint donc aux États-Unis, au Royaume-Uni, à la Bulgarie, la République Tchèque, l'Estonie, la Lettonie, la Lituanie, aux Pays Bas et à la Pologne dans l'envoi d'armements.

Le but de ce soutien de la part du Canada et de nos autres partenaires est de dissuader la Russie de poursuivre son agression contre l'Ukraine. We're not seeking confrontation with Russia but the situation is intensifying rapidly and we are showing our resolve. It's important for Canadians and the world to know that Canada will continue supporting Ukraine and its independence, integrity, sovereignty including its right to defend itself. Merci tout le monde. Je cède maintenant la parole à la Vice Première Ministre Freeland.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Merci M. le Premier Ministre, bonjour tout le monde. À travers le monde les démocraties libérales sont confrontées à des menaces sérieuses et répétées. Nous avons peut-être pensé et peut-être même espéré que le Canada serait épargné. Depuis deux semaines et demie nous avons réalisé que ce n'est pas le cas.

Ce siège et ces barrages causent des dommages importants à notre économie, à nos institutions démocratiques et à la réputation du Canada dans le monde. La confiance internationale envers le Canada comme un endroit propice aux investissements et pour faire des affaires est ébranlée. These illegal barricades are doing great damage to Canada's economy and to our reputation as a reliable trading partner.

The blockade of the Ambassador Bridge has affected about \$390 million in trade each day. This bridge supports 30% of all trade by road between Canada and the US, our most important trading partner. In Coutts Alberta, about \$48 million in daily trade has been affected by the blockades. In Emerson Manitoba, about \$73 million in daily trade has been affected by the blockades.

These costs are real. They threaten businesses big and small and they threaten the livelihoods of Canadian workers just as we are all working so hard to recover from the economic damage caused by COVID. Nous nous sommes battus bec et ongles pour protéger la relation privilégiée du Canada avec les États-Unis lors des négociations de l'ALENA et nous nous sommes tenus debout face aux tarifs 232 qui étaient illégaux et injustifiés.

Nous ne laisserons pas ces victoires durement gagnées être ternies. Le monde nous regarde. Nos emplois, notre prospérité et nos gagne-pains sont en jeu. C'est pourquoi notre gouvernement agit. Nous sommes résolus et déterminés. Ces barrages illégaux doivent être levés et ils le seront. As part of invoking the Emergencies Act we are announcing the following immediate actions.

First, we are broadening the scope of Canada's anti money laundering and terrorist financing rules so they cover crowd funding platforms and the payment service providers they use. These changes cover all forms of transactions including digital assets such as cryptocurrencies. The illegal blockades have highlighted the fact that crowdfunding platforms and some of the payment service providers they use are not fully captured under the Proceeds of Crime and Terrorist Financing Act.

Our banks and financial institutions are already obligated to report to the financial transactions and reports analysis centre of Canada or FINTRAC. As of today, all crowdfunding platforms and the payment service providers they use must register with FINTRAC and must report large and suspicious transactions to FINTRAC.

This will help mitigate the risk that these platforms receive illicit funds, increase the quality and quantity of intelligence received by FINTRAC and make more information available to support investigations by law enforcement into these illegal blockades. We are making these changes because we know these platforms are being used to support illegal blockades and illegal activity which is damaging the Canadian economy.

The government will also bring forward legislation to provide these authorities to FINTRAC on a permanent basis. Second, the government is issuing an order with immediate effect under the Emergencies Act authorizing Canadian financial institutions to temporarily cease providing financial services where the institution suspects that an account is being used to further the illegal blockades and occupations. This order covers both personal and corporate accounts.

Third, we are directing Canadian financial institutions to review their relationships with anyone involved in the illegal blockades and report to the RCMP or CSIS. As of today, a bank or other financial service provider will be able to immediately freeze or suspend an account without a court order. In doing so they will be protected against civil liability for actions taken in good faith.

Federal government institutions will have a new broad authority to share relevant information with banks and other financial service providers to ensure that we can all work together to put a stop to the funding of these illegal blockades. This is about following the money. This is about stopping the financing of these illegal blockades. We are today serving notice.

If your truck is being used in these illegal blockades, your corporate accounts will be frozen. The insurance on your vehicle will be suspended. Send your semi trailers home. The Canadian economy needs them to be doing legitimate work, not to be illegally making us all poorer. Il s'agit de suivre l'argent. Il s'agit de mettre fin au financement de ces blocages illégaux.

Considérez-vous averti. Si votre camion est utilisé dans ces blocages, vos comptes d'entreprise seront gelés. L'assurance de votre véhicule sera suspendue. Renvoyez vos remorques chez eux. L'économie canadienne a besoin qu'ils fassent un travail légitime et pas qu'ils nous rendent illégalement plus pauvres. Nous annonçons ces mesures après mûre réflexion.

Je me suis entretenue directement avec les dirigeants des banques canadiennes. Je tiens à les remercier de faire le nécessaire pour assurer le respect des lois et de la démocratie canadienne et pour protéger notre économie. Team Canada has stood together over the past two years. We have trusted one another.

We have leaned on one another. What we are facing today is a threat to our democratic institutions, to our economy and to peace, order and good government in Canada. This is unacceptable. It cannot stand and it will not stand. Thank you. I'll turn the floor to our Attorney General and Minister of Justice David Lametti.

Hon. David Lametti: Thank you Deputy Prime Minister, Prime Minister, colleagues, Canadians. Good afternoon. Canada is a rule of law country. By declaring a public order emergency under the Emergencies Act, we are following the law and we are acting within it. There are clear conditions set out in the Emergencies Act in order for a public order emergency to be declared.

Our government believes those conditions have been met. That requires the government of Canada to act. La Loi sur les Mesures d'Urgence existe depuis 1988 et a remplacé la Loi sur les Mesures de Guerre. Elle est différente de cette dernière de deux façons très importantes.

Premièrement la Loi sur les Mesures d'Urgence contient plusieurs balises et sauvegardes dont un examen parlementaire. Deuxièmement les mesures prises en vertu de la loi doivent respecter la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés. The Emergencies Act can only be invoked in specific serious circumstances that amount to a national emergency.

For a situation to be qualified as a national emergency three conditions must be met. First, we must be in a situation that either seriously endangers lives, health or safety of Canadians and exceeds the capacity or authority of a province to deal with it or seriously threatens the ability of the government of Canada to preserve the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of Canada.

Second, the provinces and territories capacity to handle the situation must be considered insufficient or must show gaps. Third, we must conclude the situation cannot be handled adequately under any other Canadian law including provincial and territorial laws. Une fois l'urgence déclarée la Loi sur les Mesures d'Urgence permet au gouvernement fédéral d'adopter les décrets ou les règlements nécessaires pour intervenir.

Notre gouvernement respecte les droits et les libertés des Canadiens tels que protégés par la Charte. C'est notre intention d'utiliser uniquement les pouvoirs nécessaires, raisonnables et mesurés pour résoudre la crise de façon rapide et sécuritaire. The Emergencies Act also contains a number of significant limits, checks and safeguards.

As required by the Act, earlier today and on occasion over the past week, the Prime Minister and members of Cabinet have consulted with Premiers and members of their respective governments. Having now declared a public order emergency, we will table the declaration in Parliament as required within seven days.

In the coming days a Parliamentary committee will be struck to provide oversight while the emergency is in effect. The declaration only lasts for 30 days unless renewed. However we can and sincerely hope to revoke the emergency much sooner. Parliament also has the ability to revoke the declaration of the emergency as set out clearly in the Act.

Once an emergency is declared the Emergencies Act permits the federal government to make necessary orders or regulations to deal with the emergency. The Prime Minister gave the broad outline of these in his remarks. There are six specific measures we feel are needed to bring this situation under control. First, the regulation and prohibition of public assemblies that lead to a breach of peace and go beyond lawful protests.

What we are seeing in Ottawa and what we are seeing at the Ambassador Bridge are not lawful protests. Second, designating and securing places where blockades are to be prohibited. This could include the borders, approaches to borders and other critical infrastructures or Ottawa. Directing persons to render essential services to relieve impacts of blockades on Canada's economy and this could include tow trucks and their drivers for compensation of course.

Authorizing or directing financial institutions to render essential services to relieve the impact of blockades including as we have heard from the Deputy Prime Minister regulating and prohibiting the use of property to fund or support the blockades. Measures enabling the RCMP to enforce municipal bylaws and provincial offences where required.

Finally, the imposition of fines or imprisonment for a contravention of any order or regulation made under section 19 of the Emergencies Act. Les décrets et règlements qui permettront de concrétiser les mesures seront élaborés sous peu et déposés devant le Parlement dans les deux jours de séance suivant la date de leur prise comme exige la loi.

Le Parlement a le pouvoir de révoquer un décret, ce qui assure que toutes les mesures prises le seront de manière responsable, mesurée et dans le respect des balises établies. In closing, I want to emphasize one point clearly. These measures are temporary. We intend to impose them for only as long as needed to restore order across the country. Thank you, merci.

Moderator: Thank you Minister Lametti. The Prime Minister and Ministers will be taking 30 minutes for questions starting in the foyer. Le Premier Ministre et les Ministres prendront 30 minutes pour des questions en commençant avec les journalistes dans la salle, starting with David Turgeon from CBC.

Question: A number of Premiers today have come out and say they don't want or need the federal government to exercise its emergency powers in their provinces. How do you respond to the Premiers who have come out today and said that?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: I thank the Premiers for having had the conversation with me this morning. It was extremely important to talk about what's happening right across the country. We have seen challenges across the country that are linked to what we are seeing in Ottawa and at border crossings but allow me to repeat what I said before.

The measures brought in today are geographically specific and targeted only to where they are needed. These are not blanket powers across the country. These will be tools that can be used where and when necessary so that the police of jurisdiction dealing with blockades or occupations have the tools necessary and can draw on RCMP resources as necessary to keep Canadians safe, to restore confidence in the rule of law and in our institutions and to make sure our economy continues to recover from the impacts of COVID over the past two years.

Question: At least one of the Premiers said invoking this act is like putting oil on a raging fire, words along those lines. Do you think you're inflaming the situation even more by invoking this?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: My focus is on Canadians who have had a long two years, who have been through a pandemic, lost loved ones, who have seen businesses struggle, lost jobs and just want this to be over. They're exhausted. We're all exhausted. We're all frustrated by the pandemic. But those people who disagree with the measures that governments put in place to keep Canadians safe, to ensure we would make through this pandemic better than many of our peer countries.

Those people have gone from protesting and disagreeing with those measures to limiting and blocking the freedoms of their fellow citizens, hurting jobs, hurting lives and livelihoods, endangering public safety and weakening our country not just right now but for times to come in the eyes of our most important trading partners.

These illegal blockades are hurting Canadians and they need to stop. Every step of the way we have been there to support the police of jurisdiction. We've been there with tools and resources to help end these blockades.

But it is clear there are more tools necessary and that is why we are moving forward with time limited geographically specific extremely bounded measures and additional powers that will allow us to get through these blockades and occupations and get back to the business of rebuilding our lives and our country after this pandemic.

Question: Comme on a laissé entendre, il y a certains critères qui vont devoir être rencontrés mais les Premiers Ministres de certaines provinces sont déjà contre. Si les critères étaient nécessaires selon vous, est-ce que vous seriez prêt à aller de l'avant dans les provinces qui ne veulent pas avoir la loi appliquée?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: Les conversations que nous sommes en train d'avoir avec tous nos partenaires à travers le pays et avec les polices de juridiction qui sont en train de gérer différentes situations à travers le pays vont continuer. Cette Loi sur les Mesures d'Urgence est là pour donner des outils additionnels aux forces policières en place pour pouvoir régler les situations qui pourraient surgir.

Ce n'est pas automatiquement une intervention de la police fédérale ou un engagement direct du fédéral. On est là pour donner plus d'outils y compris les autorités additionnelles à la police de juridiction quand c'est nécessaire. Donc c'est très possible et on l'espère même que les outils qu'on a mis de l'avant aujourd'hui à la disposition des forces policières à travers le pays ne seront pas énormément utilisés, certainement pas pendant longtemps.

Ce serait l'idéal que ces Premiers Ministres qui disent qu'ils ont tout en main continuent de garder tout en main mais à un niveau national on est rendu dans les critères ou il fallait agir pour donner plus d'outils à nos services de l'ordre pour pouvoir assurer le bien être de tous les Canadiens d'un bout du pays à l'autre.

Question: Vous dites que maintenant c'est nécessaire. À Ottawa on attend la troisième semaine de manifestations. Pourquoi pas avoir mis en place ces outils il y a

deux semaines? Est-ce que vous n'avez pas manqué un peu à votre devoir de justement mettre ces ressources en place?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: Je comprends qu'il y ait des gens qui disent on a agi trop rapidement. Il y en a d'autres qui disent ah non, on aurait dû agir il y a des semaines. La réalité c'est que la Loi sur les Mesures d'Urgence n'est pas quelque chose à prendre à la légère et ce n'est pas le premier outil qu'on prend, même le deuxième ou le troisième.

On a été là pour donner plus de ressources dès le début à la police locale à Ottawa et ailleurs. Nous avons été là pour les accompagner dans le travail qu'ils ont fait et dans les derniers jours, dans les rencontres que j'ai eues avec les Ministres, avec nos partenaires, avec les hauts fonctionnaires cela a été clair qu'il y a un besoin d'outils additionnels et c'est ces outils limités, raisonnables et responsables qu'on est en train de mettre de l'avant avec la Loi sur les Mesures d'Urgence.

Question: Mackenzie Gray with CTV. You mentioned the RCMP now have the ability to enforce provincial and municipal laws. Does that mean they will be the lead police force agency in Ottawa? When can we expect more police officers from the RCMP to work with the city of Ottawa because they've been asking for that for a substantial period of time?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: As I said, the invocation of the Emergencies Act gives more powers to the police of jurisdiction. It does not make the RCMP automatically police of jurisdiction anywhere across the country. As we have been, we will ensure the RCMP continue to work to support local police of jurisdiction and that's what we have been doing in Ottawa. On this question I'm happy to turn to Minister Mendicino who can give further information on the situation in Ottawa.

Hon. Marco Mendicino: Thanks very much Prime Minister. From the beginning of the illegal blockades the federal government has been working closely with local law enforcement where they are the police of jurisdiction including in Ottawa. I would point out we have sent three instalments of reinforcements to ensure that Ottawa police has the support they need.

But I think as we've seen without question there have been many challenges on the ground to restoring public order on the streets. One only has to look at the situation on Wellington Street over the past number of weekends. I think it's difficult to overstate the impact of those scenes, the conduct that has unfolded by those participating in illegal blockades.

It is not just an inconvenience. It is not simply a matter of a trivial interruption. We've seen intimidation, harassment and expressions of hate and at times the scenes on the streets of Wellington have seemed completely lawless. That is one of the reasons why we've had to take the very careful and deliberate step of introducing the Emergencies Act today and the declaration and the specific powers which again are very targeted, very proportionate and time limited so there can be greater agility between the RCMP who will work seamlessly with local law enforcement including in Ottawa to restore order.

I would also say while we have seen progress for example in Windsor, we should not assume that progress is linear. That is one of the reasons why these measures through the declaration are also necessary. We want to be certain that local law enforcement has the concrete tools they need, for example tow trucks which have been hard to come by.

In addition to that, the kind of barriers which will assist with crowd control that will ensure that trade and traffic can move efficiently. In addition to that when it comes to the relationship between the RCMP and local law enforcement and provincial enforcement, the provision in the declaration will allow the RCMP to be more efficiently assigned to those areas to uphold the law.

Be they municipal, provincial or indeed the designated zones that will be prohibited from assembly because they may cause a breach of peace or may interrupt our critical infrastructure through

trade. So when you look at the suite of measures we put into place today and we've put a lot of thought into that, our view is they are necessary and will assist us in dealing with the illegal blockades and bring them to a peaceful and expeditious resolution.

Question: Mr. Mendicino just mentioned when you look at Wellington Street you see lawless scenes. Why do you have any faith that the Ottawa police after three weeks is now going to be able to turn things around and restore law and order in this area?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: In regards to the Ottawa police, we have been working closely not just the RCMP but the OPP to ensure there is a coordinated approach on that but in terms of confidence in the police I think we could do worse than turn to our Minister of Emergency Preparedness Bill Blair to respond to that.

Hon. Bill Blair: Good afternoon everyone. The Ottawa police service remains the police of jurisdiction in the city of Ottawa but the police services across Canada and in Ontario have been coming together and they recently announced on Friday the formation of an integrated command structure for managing this event. That brings the resources and capacities of the OPP and the RCMP to the assistance of the Ottawa police.

We've also had conversations with other police agencies across Ontario. They recognize the situation here and the importance of ensuring there are adequate resources but it's not simply an issue of resources but of authorities. We have been working from the outset with the municipality and with the province to ensure our police services in Ottawa and across Canada have the authorities and resources they need to do the important job.

As I said yesterday, policing is an important institution in our society. We need the police to do their job of upholding our laws to maintain the rule of law and to maintain public order and safety of our communities. We have a responsibility to make sure they have the resources and tools they need to do that job. They have our support. As that support grows in Ottawa I have confidence they'll be able to restore order with the support we're providing.

Question: Stephanie Taylor with the Canadian Press. You emphasized we're not calling in the military to deal with the situation but all options as you said last week are on the table. What would it take for you to bring the military into this situation? What would the criteria be and what would it take for you to make that decision?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: I'm not going to engage in hypotheticals. What is most important is that Canadians get their lives, their communities, their neighbourhoods back and can once again rely on their jobs and the trade and the supply chains that are supporting them, putting food on their table.

The reality is the measures we put forward today which have been carefully thought through will give the tools to law enforcement to be able to move in even stronger and clearer ways against these illegal protests, these illegal occupations and blockades that are hurting Canadians.

We will continue to monitor and do the things necessary to keep Canadians safe. Like I said, this Emergencies Act in no way brings in the military as a solution against Canadians. We are empowering law enforcement. That's what Canadians want to see.

Question: Over the weekend Minister Blair expressed that he was baffled by the lack of law enforcement he saw. I want to know what you think. Do you agree with him that it is baffling, the Ottawa police are not enforcing more the laws? What do you make of the policing you have seen to date on Wellington Street and elsewhere in Ottawa?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: There is a high level of frustration among residents of Ottawa that this situation has gone on as long as it has. Certainly the frustration people feel in Ottawa

has been echoed across the country and around the world and it is important that the police of jurisdiction, working with the OPP and the RCMP, are able to put an end to these illegal protests.

The specific and limited measures we are putting forward today as part of the Emergencies Act will give them further tools that in their coordinated response between the Ottawa police services, the OPP and the RCMP working together should be able to respond to these concerns by the citizens of Ottawa who want their city back.

Moderator: We'll take one last question in the foyer before turning to the phone.

Question: Ryan Tumilty National Post. Over the weekend Mayor Jim Watson in Ottawa made a deal with the protest organizers to move more trucks onto Wellington Street and out of residential areas. Can you give me any reaction to that deal?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: I know that the city of Ottawa, its police services and its elected officials have been pursuing an end to these blockades. This has gone on far too long. It is no longer a lawful protest at a disagreement over government policy. It is now an illegal occupation. It is time for people to go home. The measures we've put forward today will be additional tools for law enforcement at all levels to be able to secure an end to these blockades.

Question: You're announcing today rules around preventing banks from dealing with these illegal blockades. The city of Ottawa has dealt with these illegal blockades. Don't you find that problematic, that they have cut a deal to put more trucks directly in front of Parliament Hill?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: We are working in a concerted way on measures that will hopefully restore order to the city of Ottawa and allow residents to get back to their lives. The measures we put forward today around empowering banks to follow up and to ensure that funds are not used for illegal activities such as blockades will be significantly helpful in reducing the size and impact of these blockades.

Moderator: On va maintenant tourner au téléphone.

Operator: Please press *1 at this time if you have a question. S'il vous plaît appuyer *1 maintenant pour poser une question. La première question va être de Raymond Filion, TVA. Please go ahead.

Question: M. le Premier Ministre, quand entrent en vigueur les pouvoirs spéciaux de la Loi sur les Mesures d'Urgence pour les policiers que vous annoncez aujourd'hui?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: L'impact de cette déclaration est immédiat. Nous allons formuler des politiques et des propositions spécifiques dans les heures à venir, dans les jours à venir qui vont avoir ces impacts spécifiques. Mais je vais me tourner vers le Ministre de la Justice qui peut en parler plus longuement.

Hon. David Lametti : On va déposer des ordres en conseil en suivant la loi une fois que les ordres sont annoncés et rentrent en vigueur. Ce sera au Parlement de regarder après de faire leur devoir mais les ordres rentrent en vigueur tout de suite.

Question: Plusieurs vous ont reproché votre ton face aux manifestants ces dernières semaines. On vous a accusé de jeter de l'huile sur le feu en parlant entre autres d'une minorité qui rouspète. Est-ce que vous sentez un degré de responsabilité pour l'ampleur que ces manifestations ont pris?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau:

Ce qu'on a vu et ce qu'on voit maintenant à travers le Canada c'est que bien sûr les gens sont fatigués, frustrés, tannés de la pandémie, tanné des mesures de santé publique, veulent que ce soit fini. Tout le monde est d'accord là-dessus. Mais ce qu'on a vu aussi c'est que les Canadiens à travers le pays ont été là les uns pour les autres, ont été là pour s'entraider pour suivre les mesures de santé publique, pour se faire vacciner à un plus haut taux que la plupart de nos pays pairs à travers le monde.

On a démontré en tant que pays que les gens continuent d'être là les uns pour les autres et maintenant les gens qui voient leur vie déboussolée par ces barricades à Ottawa, de voir les gens souffrir parce qu'il y a des blocages aux frontières qui les empêchent de faire leur job et limitent les chaînes d'approvisionnement.

Ces gens-là sont fâchés et tannés encore plus et veulent qu'on agisse pour remettre de l'ordre dans notre pays, pour démontrer qu'on est un pays de règles et de droits ou oui on encourage les manifestations paisibles. On encourage les gens d'exprimer haut et fort leurs opinions mais on n'accepte pas que les gens viennent endommager notre économie et faire mal et brimer les libertés de leurs concitoyens par des manifestations illégales.

Operator:

Star. Please go ahead.

The next question is from Tonda McCharles, Toronto

Question:

Prime Minister, I didn't hear an answer to the question Mac asked about reinforcements from the RCMP to the city of Ottawa. If you can answer that great but how specifically do you justify giving even more power to police in Ottawa when many residents and policing experts say the law enforcement here has not used the power they already have under existing laws? This is a failure of policing leadership, not the need for more power?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau:

There will be time later to reflect on all the lessons that can be learned from this situation. Right now we are ensuring that 5 local police of jurisdiction have both the legal authorities that they need to do their jobs but also the extra resources. We have delivered not just RCMP officers as the OPP has delivered OPP officers to support the city of Ottawa. We've also provided integrated planning and coordination task force to ensure that we are able to see an end to this occupation of Ottawa.

Question:

I'd like you to speak if you could, you mentioned as did Minister Freeland the reputational damage to the country that you feel the border protests have had and the impact on Canada's reputation as a reliable trading partner.

Can you speak more about what was the tipping point for you in all of this. Was it really the fact that the White House has been weighing in and burning up the phone lines all weekend to all your Ministers? Why have you moved to do this?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau:

For me the conversations I had with our Windsor MP, Irek Kusmierczyk who was talking about the impact of the disruption of the Ambassador Bridge almost as soon as it started happening, the impact on workers in the auto sector in the Windsor area and up the supply chain through southern Ontario.

The direct impact hurting exactly the people that these convoy protesters are purporting to represent. Regular Canadians are hurting in their jobs, in our economic recovery, in their freedom to travel to see friends and loved ones on the other side of the border because of illegal protests and barricades. We have been there to support local police of jurisdiction and we are now putting forward fresh tools to do that.

In terms of the reputational damage, in my conversations with fellow leaders around the world on the situation in Ukraine and others, it has been clear that this is something that democracies around the world are concerned with. Countries that did well during the pandemic, high vaccination rates and

strong public health measures, are still seeing backlashes against those measures and frustration by people who are tired of this pandemic.

The impact of social media and illicit funding, of concerted activities designed to destabilize a country that has the highest vaccination rate of many of our peer countries, Canada, around an issue that is not dividing Canadians. Canadians are united in having been there for each other through this pandemic.

They're even united in being sick and tired of this pandemic. But the way to get through it is not to shut down our economy and hurt our neighbours. That is something that people understand around the world. With this measure here today showing that Canada remains a country of the rule of law, that will protect its critical infrastructure, that will support good jobs that deliver goods and services not just to Canadians but people around the world, are going to be protected.

Operator: La prochaine question est de Boris Proulx, Le Devoir. À vous la parole.

Question: Quelle preuve avez-vous que les capacités provinciales ne sont pas suffisantes pour gérer cette crise?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: Je suis très content de pouvoir tourner cette question vers le Ministre Lametti.

Hon. David Lametti: Évidemment la réponse se trouve à travers le Canada et ça se trouve aussi la réponse dans les mesures qu'on va prendre. Évidemment on va appuyer les services policiers à travers le pays avec les ressources dont ils ont besoin mais je vous dirige vers les mesures annoncées par la Vice Première Ministre aujourd'hui.

C'est la capacité d'empêcher l'utilisation de la propriété privée, les camions disons, qui si on regarde les drapeaux ici sur Wellington, il y a des drapeaux de Québec, d'Alberta. Il y a plusieurs camions enregistrés partout au Canada. Je remercie M. Ford pour avoir pris des mesures en Ontario. Mais ce qu'on a fait aujourd'hui nous permet et cela va permettre soit une porte d'entrée soit ici à Ottawa aux services financiers à travers le Canada, de nous aider à faire sortir, à dégager les rues.

Pourquoi? Parce que cela touche entièrement le Canada et c'est dans une telle mesure, une telle loi qu'on peut le faire. On ne peut pas le faire avec des mesures provinciales.

Question: Si une province n'en veut pas de cet état d'urgence, est-ce qu'elle peut choisir de s'exclure des mesures d'urgence annoncées aujourd'hui?

Hon. David Lametti: Non. Selon la loi et la loi a été rédigée par les Conservateurs de M. Mulroney en 1988 nous avons un devoir de consulter avec les provinces, ce qu'on a fait. Évidemment on va continuer à travailler avec les provinces, ce qu'on a fait et ce qu'on va continuer à faire. Mais une fois qu'une urgence à l'échelle nationale est déclenchée, les lois s'appliquent à travers le Canada.

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: Évidemment c'est une loi qui s'applique sur l'entièreté du Canada mais les outils qu'on offre, les actions qu'on va prendre ne seront pas appliquées partout à travers le Canada, ne seront appliquées que là où elles sont réellement nécessaires en travaillant avec les juridictions locales. Donc oui, même si théoriquement l'impact parce que c'est une loi fédérale sur les mesures d'urgence cela s'applique partout au Canada, cela ne va avoir un impact concret qu'ou il y en a réellement besoin et cela évidemment ce n'est pas partout au Canada.

Operator: The last question is from Marieke Walsh, the Globe and Mail. Please go ahead.

Question: Minister Lametti said that this will apply across Canada and that provinces will not be able to opt out. Your opening statement said this would be geographically targeted. Can you explain where specifically in Canada this will apply?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: I just answered that in French and I'm happy to repeat it because it is an important point that people need to understand. The Emergency Measures Act as it is applied when it is a national emergency that touches more than one province as this one is, necessarily covers the entire country because it is a federal national emergency act.

However, the specific provisions that we have laid out in the Act, the measures necessary will only apply where they are needed. We talked about geographically limited obviously to continue to ensure that the Ambassador Bridge remains free and clear for traffic. That is a place where the measures brought in by this Emergencies Act will matter.

A small community elsewhere in the country a long way from borders or critical infrastructure that is not experiencing any significant illegal protests are unlikely to see any impact from the Emergencies Act. This is the element that is limited to where it is needed. Indeed in places where there is a significant border crossing where the local police of jurisdiction have no need of additional RCMP support or even the additional tools we have made available to them, they will not have to use those additional tools.

Even though the Emergencies Act applies to the entire country, it is targeted, time limited and geographically specific based on need as to where it will actually be felt and have an impact on the ground.

Question: Can you clarify then will it apply in Emerson Manitoba, Coutts Alberta and Surrey BC? How will you measure the success of it, that this is not just your government appearing to do something but that actual results happen?

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: I think Canadians know well that the measure of success will be can we get our supply chains back. Can we end the disruption to livelihoods of people who rely on trade to the US from these border crossings? Can the citizens of Ottawa get back to their daily lives including as we saw just a few weeks ago when a perfectly peaceful protest involving tractors and trucks of potatoes from PEI were on Parliament Hill highlighting their concerns?

That is how this country needs to work and how protests can and should unfold. But this illegal occupation needs to end and that is where we have now given the specific tools necessary for that. In regards to Emerson and Coutts, one of the issues we have seen is a challenge in getting tow trucks to actually show up to bring out, to move these large rigs.

In Windsor we relied on generous partnership with the Americans to be able to get tow trucks to move the big trucks. Now with these measures we've put in place there will be an ability to compel for just compensation tow truck owners and operators to do the jobs for which they have contracts with various orders of government to keep highways and roads clear. This is an example of a specific tool that is now available to local police of jurisdiction in places across the country if needed. It will be to them to determine whether or not that is needed.

Moderator: Merci beaucoup. Ceci met fin à la conférence de presse aujourd'hui. This is what ends today's presser.

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau: Merci beaucoup tout le monde.

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